

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:MPOL, NATO, UK, US

SUBJECT:EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN SECDEF RUMSFELD AND
UK AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM ON ROLAND/RAPIER

REF: SECDEF 6248 DTG 161935Z

1. SECDEF RUMSFELD AND UK AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM RECENTLY
EXCHANGED FOLLOWING LETTERS ON ROLAND/RAPIER: (DAOS RE-
CEIVED TEXT BY REFTEL). BEGIN TEXT.

29 SEPTEMBER 1976 LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM TO
SECRETARY RUMSFELD:

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

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I HAVE SEEN A COPY OF MR. JEFFERSON'S LETTER OF 21

SEPTEMBER 1976 TO YOU CONCERNING THE PROPOSALS THAT HAVE RESUBMITTED IN RESPECT OF RAPIER AS PART OF YOUR CURRENT REVIEW OF THE SHORADS PROGRAMME. AS THE LETTER INDICATED, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RAPIER SYSTEM SINCE 1975 WHICH MAKE THE REVISED PROPOSALS MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN HITHERTO, NAMELY THE EARLY OPERATIONAL AVAILABILITY, THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRACKED VEHICLE VERSION AND THE QUOTATION OF A PRICE FOR R&D AND PRODUCTION WHICH WILL NOT BE EXCEEDED.

I AM GLAD THAT UNITED TECHNOLOGIES, WHO WOULD MANUFACTURE THE SYSTEM UNDER LICENSE IN THE UNITED STATES, HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT AND ARGUE THESE REVISED PROPOSALS, AND NO DOUBT THESE ARE BEING GIVEN THE FULLEST CONSIDERATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ROLAND SYSTEM IN THE CURRENT REVIEW. HOWEVER, SINCE MY GOVERNMENT WERE INVITED TO REPRESENT THE RAPIER SYSTEM, THEY ARE, OF COURSE, EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW AND IN LEARNING HOW THE REVISED PROPOSALS WERE RECEIVED, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF MR. MULLEY'S VISIT PLANNED FOR 15 OCTOBER.

I HOPE YOU AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF I COULD REASSURE MR. MULLEY THAT THE RAPIER SYSTEM HAS BEEN FULLY RECONSIDERED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ROLAND SYSTEM AND, IF IT IS DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE LATTER, I HOPE I MAY EXPLAIN TO MR. MULLEY THE OPERATIONAL, TECHNICAL AND COST GROUNDS ON WHICH THE DECISION WAS TAKEN. I AM SURE YOU WILL APPRECIATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GENERAL QUESTIONS OF STANDARDIZATION AND THE "TWO-WAY STREET" WHICH MR. MULLEY WILL NO DOUBT WANT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU DURING HIS VISIT.

UNFORTUNATELY, I SHALL BE AWAY FROM WASHINGTON BETWEEN 29 SEPTEMBER AND 6 OCTOBER, BUT SIR JOHN MORETON WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER FURTHER WITH YOU OR YOUR OFFICIALS, IF YOU THINK IT APPROPRIATE.

YOURS SINCERELY,

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PETER RAMSBOTHAM

14 OCTOBER 1976 LETTER FROM SECRETARY RUMSFELD TO AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM:

DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR:

I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR LETTER OF 29 SEPTEMBER 1976

REGARDING THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED BY UNITED TECHNOLOGIES CONCERNING THE RAPIER MISSILE SYSTEM. YOU MAY BE ASSURED THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN CONSIDERED IN DETAIL.

AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE ROLAND PROGRAM HAS BEEN UNDERWAY FOR OVER TWO YEARS. IT HAS EXPERIENCED SOME DIFFICULTIES WHICH WE ARE NOW REVIEWING, ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, IN DECIDING OUR BEST OVERALL COURSE OF ACTION. THE OPERATIONAL, TECHNICAL AND COST DATA RELATIVE TO THE CURRENT RAPIER SYSTEM ARE HELPFUL FACTORS

IN OUR REVIEW. A FINAL DECISION HAS NOT BEEN REACHED AS OF THIS DATE.

I WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH MR. MULLEY ON 15 OCTOBER AND TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

SINCERELY,

DONALD H. RUMSFELD. END TEXT.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE TRANSMITTING THIS FOR YOUR INFORMATION SINCE IT IS A SIGNIFICANT EXCHANGE ON A SUBSTANTIVE AREA OF REAL CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ROBINSON

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